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U.S. Health department will analyze data from autistic Medicare, Medicaid enrollees, RFK Jr. says

By **AMANDA SEITZ**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) —

Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. announced a plan Wednesday to use medical data and records from people on Medicaid and Medicare to help study autism although experts say it's unlikely to help reveal the condition's root causes.

The program will involve a data sharing agreement between the National Institutes of Health, the government's health research arm, and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, which has access to claims data from nearly 150 million Americans across the country.

"We're using this partnership to uncover the root causes of autism and other chronic diseases," Kennedy said in a statement.

The agreement will be "consistent with applicable privacy laws to protect Americans' sensitive health information," the HHS statement said. The health de-



Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. speaks during an event with President Donald Trump to sign executive orders and proclamations in the Oval Office of the White House, Monday, May 5, 2025, in Washington.

partment did not respond to additional questions about the program.

Using the data, the agency said researchers will focus on autism diagnosis trends, health outcomes from medical or behavioral

treatment, access to care based on demographics and geography as well the economic burden of autism on families and health care systems.

The problem is that this isn't the kind of data needed

to answer questions about autism's causes, said Helen Tager-Flusberg, professor emerita at Boston University who leads a new Coalition of Autism Scientists pushing back on Kennedy's characterizations of the condi-

tion.

"Enough research has been done at this point to know there is no simple magic bullet," she said, cautioning that this type of dataset won't help with the type of research most needed into genetics and other prenatal, preconception and early infancy factors.

Kennedy has directed the health department to undertake a far-reaching research effort to identify the causes of autism, a complex disorder that impacts the brain.

Announcing his plans last month, Kennedy said he plans to provide answers as to what causes autism by September. He has since said the department will determine at least "some" of the causes.

His research directive comes as autism rates in the U.S. are rising, with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention releasing a report that an estimated 1 in 31 U.S. children have autism, a marked increase from 2020. □

Associated Press

Trump designates Thursday as a day for the U.S. to celebrate victory in World War II

By **DARLENE SUPERVILLE**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump has issued a proclamation designating Thursday as a day for the United States to celebrate victory in World War II as countries in Europe already do.

Cities from London to Mos-

cow are holding parades, flyovers and memorials this week as the world observes Thursday's 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day, when Nazi Germany surrendered to Allied forces including the U.S.

"As we commemorate Victory Day for World War II, we offer our unending

thanks to every patriot from the Greatest Generation who left behind his home and family to fight for our freedom in distant lands," Trump says in the proclamation, signed Wednesday. "We honor the memories of all those who perished. Above all, we renew our commitment to keeping America and the entire world safe, secure, prosperous, and free."

World War II in Europe ended on May 8, 1945, though the war against Japan continued in the Far East. World War I ended on Nov. 11, 1918, with an armistice between Germany and the Allies, though fighting continued elsewhere. Trump is expected later this year to designate a day for U.S. celebrations of the end of the First World War. Neither day is a federal

holiday.

Trump, a Republican, complained in recent social media posts that the U.S. doesn't spend enough time celebrating its military victories like the rest of the world does. He said he was renaming May 8 as Victory Day for World War II and Nov. 11 as Victory Day for World War I.

"Many of our allies and friends are celebrating May 8th as Victory Day, but we did more than any other Country, by far, in producing a victorious result on World War II. I am hereby renaming May 8th as Victory Day for World War II and November 11th as Victory Day for World War I," he said last week on his social media site. "We won both Wars, nobody was close to us in terms of strength, bravery, or military brilliance, but

we never celebrate anything that's because we don't have leaders anymore, that know how to do so! We are going to start celebrating our victories again!"

Nov. 11 is the Veterans Day federal holiday in the United States, and only Congress has the authority to create or rename holidays.

Trump backtracked this week, saying he'd declare national holidays instead. "We won two World Wars, but we never took credit for it everyone else does! All over the World, the Allies are celebrating the Victory we had in World War II. The only Country that doesn't celebrate is the United States of America, and the Victory was only accomplished because of us," he wrote on Monday. □



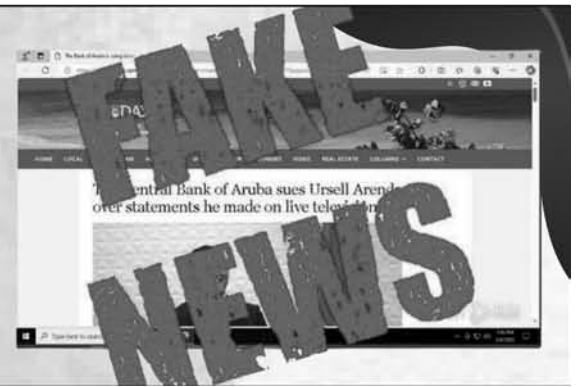
President Donald Trump speaks during a meeting with Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney in the Oval Office of the White House, Tuesday, May 6, 2025, in Washington.

Associated Press

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Lawmakers seek to rein in citizen ballot initiatives with new requirements for petitions

By DAVID A. LIEB
Associated Press

Citizen activists supporting a public vote on important issues could have to brush up on their reading, writing and arithmetic if they want to get their initiatives on next year's ballot in some states.

A new Arkansas law will bar initiative ballot titles written above an eighth-grade reading level. And canvassers will have to verify that petition signers have either read the ballot title or had it read aloud to them. In South Dakota, sponsors will need to make sure their petition titles appears in 14-point type on the front page and 16-point font on the back, where people typically sign.

And in Florida, volunteers will have to register with the state if they gather more than 25 petition signatures from outside their family or risk facing felony charges punishable by up to five years in prison.

Across about dozen states, roughly 40 bills restricting or revamping the citizen initiative process have passed at least one legislative chamber this year, according to a review by The Associated Press. Many already have been signed into law.

Some advocates for the initiative process are alarmed by the trend.

"Globally, as there's movements to expand direct democracy, in the United States it's contracting," said Dane Waters, chair of the Initiative and Referendum Institute at the University of Southern California, who has advised ballot campaigns in over 20 nations.

Most of the new restrictions come from Republican lawmakers in states where petitions have been used



Boxes containing signatures supporting a proposed ballot measure to scale back Arkansas' abortion ban are delivered to a room in the state Capitol on July 5, 2024, in Little Rock, Ark

Associated Press

to place abortion rights, marijuana legalization and other progressive initiatives on the ballot. GOP lawmakers contend their measures are shielding state constitutions from outside interests. "This is not a bill to restrict. It is a bill to protect to make sure that our constitutional system is one of integrity, and that it's free of fraud," said state Sen. Jennifer Bradley of Florida, where the new initiative requirements already have been challenged in court.

A right in some states, but not others

About half the U.S. states allow people to bypass their legislatures by gathering signatures to place proposed laws or constitutional amendments on the ballot.

Since Oregon voters first used the process in 1904, a total of 2,744 citizen initiatives have appeared on statewide ballots, with 42%

winning approval, according to the Initiative and Referendum Institute.

But the process has long caused tension between voters and their elected representatives.

Lawmakers often perceive the initiative process as "an assault on their power and authority, and they want to limit it," Waters said. "They view it, in my opinion, as a nuisance a gnat that keeps bothering them."

Restrictions on petition canvassers

Because initiative petitions require thousands of signatures to qualify for the ballot, groups sponsoring them often pay people to solicit signatures outside shopping centers and public places. Some states now prohibit payments based on the number of signatures gathered.

States also are trying to restrict who can circulate petitions. A new Arkansas law

requires paid petition canvassers to live in the state. And a new Montana law will make petition circulators wear badges displaying their name and home state.

The new Florida law expanding registration requirements for petition circulators also requires them to undergo state training and bars canvassers who are noncitizens, nonresidents or have been convicted of felony offenses without their voting rights restored.

More requirements for petition signers

In addition to providing their name, address and birth date, people signing initiative petitions in Florida also will have to provide either their Florida driver's license, state identification card or the last four digits of their Social Security number. That information is not required in other states, said

Kelly Hall, executive director of the Fairness Project, a progressive group that has backed dozens of ballot initiatives in states. Hall said people concerned about privacy might hesitate to sign petitions.

"I work in ballot measures, and I deeply support many of the things that folks have tried to put on the ballot in Florida," Hall said, "and I don't know if I could bring myself to do that – that's a very prohibitive requirement."

Making the fine print larger

Many states already prescribe a particular format for initiative petitions. South Dakota's new mandate for specific font sizes was prompted by allegations that some people got duped into signing a petition for abortion rights last year, said sponsoring state Sen. Amber Hulse, a Republican.

Printing the ballot title in large type "might make it harder for some issues to get on the ballot if people know what they're signing. But that's actually a good thing," Hulse said.

More power for elected officials Before they can collect signatures, petition sponsors must get approval from state officials. New measures in several states give those officials greater authority.

New Arkansas laws allow the attorney general to reject initiatives written above an eighth-grade reading level or which conflict with the U.S. Constitution or federal law. Utah's lieutenant governor, who already can reject unconstitutional petitions, now also will be able to turn away petitions that are unlikely to provide adequate funding for their proposed laws. □

Salt Lake City and Boise make pride flags official city emblems, skirting flag ban laws

By **HANNAH SCHOENBAUM**
and **REBECCA BOONE**
Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — The Democratic controlled cities of Salt Lake City and Boise adopted new city flags this week showing support for LGBTQ+ people in defiance of their states' Republican-controlled Legislatures, which have banned traditional rainbow pride flags at schools and government buildings.

Utah's capital of Salt Lake City created new flag designs while Boise, the capital of Idaho, made the traditional pride flag one of its official city flags. The move in Utah came hours before a ban on unsanctioned flag displays took effect Wednesday.

The cities' mayors spoke Monday night to discuss their individual plans and offer each other support, said Andrew Wittenberg, a spokesperson for Salt Lake City Mayor Erin Mendenhall's office.

"My sincere intent is not to provoke or cause division," Mendenhall said. "My intent is to represent our city's values and honor our dear diverse residents who make up this beautiful city and the legacy of pain and progress that they have endured." Idaho's flag ban took effect April 3, barring government buildings from displaying any flags except those on a short list including the U.S. flag, flags of military branches,



Lauren McLean, Mayor, City of Boise listens during a news conference at the Linen Building in Boise, Idaho, June 26, 2024.

and official flags of government entities. A separate ban containing additional exemptions for school buildings takes effect July 1. Supporters said the laws would encourage political neutrality from teachers and other government employees.

Opponents argued they aimed to erase LGBTQ+ expression and wrest authority from cities and towns that did not align politically with the Republican Legislatures. More than a dozen other states are considering similar measures.

The pride flag has regularly flown over Boise's City Hall

for years, and Mayor Lauren McLean kept the flag aloft even after Idaho's law took effect. McLean said she believed the law was unenforceable.

But Idaho Attorney General Raul Labrador recently warned he would ask lawmakers to add an enforcement mechanism in the 2026 legislative session.

Under the Utah law, state or local government buildings can be fined \$500 a day for flying any flag other than the U.S. flag, the state flag, a city or county flag, military flags, Olympic and Paralympic flags, official college flags or tribal flags. Political flags

are not allowed.

Last week, McLean responded to the Idaho law by issuing a proclamation retroactively making the pride flag an official city flag, along with a flag honoring organ donors. She maintained the law was not legally sound, but said the proclamation would bring the city into compliance, allowing both flags to be flown alongside Boise's traditional blue flag featuring the Capitol building and the slogan "City of Trees."

The city council voted 5 to 1 for a proclamation during a packed and sometimes rowdy meeting Tuesday night.

"Removing the flag now after years of flying it proudly would not be a neutral act," said council member Meredith Stead. "It would signal a retreat from values we've long upheld and send a disheartening message to those who have found affirmation and belonging through its presence at city hall."

Some in attendance held pride flags while others waved the U.S. flag. At times, shouts erupted, prompting a brief recess.

Utah in March became the first state to enact a ban on unsanctioned flags at all government buildings. Republican Gov. Spencer Cox let the bill become law without his signature. He said he thought it went too far in regulating local governments but chose not to reject it because his veto would likely be overridden by the Legislature.

Utah's law does not explicitly mention LGBTQ+ pride flags, but the bill's sponsor, Republican Rep. Trevor Lee, repeatedly stated he aimed to ban them.

Council members in Salt Lake City adopted new flag designs Tuesday evening, adding the city's emblem — a sego lily — atop the traditional rainbow LGBTQ+ pride flag and the blue, pink and white transgender flag.

Utah's Republican House Speaker Mike Schultz called that a "clear waste of time and taxpayer resources." □

Baby seal stabbed on Oregon coast prompts search for suspect



This photo provided by Gregory G Miller shows a stabbed seal pup on a beach in Neskowin, Ore., on March 27, 2025, a day after it was attacked.

Associated Press

NESKOWIN, Ore. (AP) — The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is searching for the person who stabbed a baby seal multiple times on a beach in Oregon.

The seal survived the March attack in a cove in the small town of Neskowin, which sits along the Pacific Ocean, NOAA said Monday. The administration's marine stranding team was able to help the animal relocate after monitoring and evaluating it.

The agency's law enforcement office, which is investigating the attack, was searching for a "person of interest" spotted by a witness. Officials were also looking for the owner of a vehicle seen in a parking lot near the cove behind a condominium building that may be connected with

the Sunday evening attack, according to NOAA.

Officials are asking anyone with information on the person of interest, vehicle owner or attack to call NOAA's enforcement hotline.

In the spring and summer, juvenile elephant seals will often drag themselves onto Oregon's beaches to spend weeks shedding their hair and skin, according to Oregon State University's Marine Mammal Institute. Adult elephant seals are rarely seen in the state.

The federal Marine Mammal Protection Act prohibits harassing, harming, killing or feeding wild elephant seals and other marine mammals. Violators can face criminal penalties of up to \$100,000 in fines and up to 1 year in jail. □

The Netherlands wants to force a review of EU ties with Israel as concerns grow over Gaza

By **LORNE COOK**
Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — Dutch Foreign Minister Caspar Veldkamp said Wednesday that the Netherlands is “drawing a line in the sand” over Israel’s actions in Gaza and is insisting on a review of a European Union pact governing trade ties with the country.

Israeli strikes across Gaza killed at least 59 people on Wednesday, including women and children, hospital officials said, as Israel prepares to ramp up its campaign against Hamas in a devastating war now entering its 20th month.

With Israel blocking any form of aid including food and medicine into Gaza for the past two months, aid groups have warned that Gaza’s civilian population is facing starvation.

Veldkamp expressed concern that Israel’s blockade on food and aid entering Gaza continues, that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu wants to intensify the war and that some ministers have suggested that Israel should occupy the territory.



A Palestinian man embraces the body of his 5-year-old son, Adam Namrouti, who was killed in an overnight Israeli airstrike on a UN school used as a shelter, ahead of his burial at Al-Aqsa Hospital in Deir al-Balah, in the central Gaza Strip, Wednesday, May 7, 2025.

Associated Press

Speaking at a meeting of EU foreign ministers in Warsaw, Veldkamp said that the Netherlands is “drawing a line in the sand” because the situation in the Gaza Strip is dismal, a catastrophic humanitarian situation.” Once a strong backer of Israel, the Netherlands has taken an increasing-

ly tougher line in recent months.

“The chances for a new ceasefire have become very, very limited,” Veldkamp said. “In view of the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip and action of the Israeli authorities, which go against international humanitarian law, I

believe that this signal has to be given.”

Ties between the EU and Israel which are major trading partners are governed by a so-called Association Agreement. It stipulates that their ties “shall be based on respect for human rights and democratic principles.”

The Dutch government intends to block the agreement pending an EU review into whether the Israeli government is complying with the pact, which entered force in 2000.

Israel’s offensive has killed more than 52,000 people in Gaza, many of them women and children, according to Palestinian health officials. The officials do not distinguish between combatants and civilians in their count.

The war began when Hamas-led militants attacked southern Israel, killing 1,200 people and taking about 250 hostages. Israel blames Hamas for the rising death toll in Gaza because it operates from civilian infrastructure, including schools.

The latest bloodshed came days after Israel approved a plan to intensify its operations in the Palestinian enclave. It would include seizing Gaza, holding on to captured territories, forcibly displacing Palestinians to southern Gaza and taking control of aid distribution along with private security companies. □

Biden calls Trump’s pressure on Ukraine ‘modern-day appeasement’ in 1st post-presidential interview

LONDON (AP) — Joe Biden said in his first post-presidential interview that President Donald Trump’s pressure on Ukraine to give up territory to Russia amounts to “modern-day appeasement,” a historically fraught term that refers to a failed effort to stop the Nazis from annexing land in Europe in the 1930s.

Biden told BBC Radio 4’s “Today” program in remarks aired Wednesday that Trump’s statements about acquiring Panama, Greenland and Canada have bred distrust of the United States in Europe.

“What president ever talks like that?” Biden said. “That’s not who we are. We’re about freedom, democracy, opportunity not about confiscation.”

He also said it was a “difficult decision” to leave the U.S. presidential race in 2024 four months from Election Day to allow former Vice President Kamala Harris to challenge Trump. But, he added, making that move earlier as some critics had suggested “would(n’t) have mattered.”

The term appeasement refers to former British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain’s efforts in the 1930s to appease Adolf Hitler’s moves to annex land in Europe, which failed to prevent World War II.

Trump has long dismissed the war in Ukraine as a waste of lives and American taxpayer money. Early in his presidency, Trump ordered a pause in Ameri-

can aid to Ukraine then resumed it. The two countries last week signed an agreement granting American access to Ukraine’s vast mineral resources a return on investment, Trump suggested, that could pave the way for more U.S. aid. He has also said that Crimea, a strategic peninsula along the Black Sea in southern Ukraine that was illegally annexed by Russia in 2014, “will stay with Russia.” Biden said he worried that relations between the U.S. and Europe was eroding under Trump, with NATO member nations reconsidering whether they trust the U.S.

“Europe is going to lose confidence in the certainty of America and the leadership of America,” Biden

told the BBC. The continent’s leaders, he added, were asking: “‘Can I rely on the United States? Are they going to be there?’” Of special concern, Biden

said, was the administration’s proposal to let Russia keep some Ukrainian territory in an effort to strike a peace deal that would put an end to fighting. □



President Joe Biden, left, joined by President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy, speaks during an event on the Ukraine Compact on the sidelines of the NATO Summit in Washington, Thursday, July 11, 2024.

Associated Press

Brazilian state's deforestation amnesty poses 'one of the greatest threats' to the Amazon

By **FABIANO MAISONNAVE**
SAO PAULO, Brazil (AP) —

With little fanfare and virtually no publicity, lawmakers in the Brazilian state of Rondonia have passed legislation in favor of hundreds of cattle ranchers who had illegally converted swathes of Amazon rainforest into pasture land.

The new legislation, which was passed April 28 and took effect immediately, also grants amnesty to slaughterhouses that purchased cattle illegally raised inside what had been the Jaci-Parana conservation area, which the new law effectively dissolves.

"All fines, notices of violation and other administrative penalties tied to the occupation and use of the area are automatically voided and carry no legal or financial consequences," declared the law.

One of the beneficiaries of the amnesty is likely to be JBS SA, the world's largest meatpacker, which is poised to start selling shares on the New York Stock Exchange in June. According to a 2023 audit by Brazil's Federal Prosecution Service, 12% of cattle purchased by JBS in Rondonia



Cattle walk along an illegally deforested area in an extractive reserve near Jaci-Parana, Rondonia state, Brazil, July 12, 2023.

came from illegally deforested areas.

In exchange for the amnesty, cattle ranchers must join Rondonia's environmental regularization program, which requires them to halt deforestation and submit a plan to reforest part of the area. The law does not give them the public land, but allows it to be used under concession for 30 years. They will also be allowed to

sell cattle, despite a law forbidding commercial cattle in Brazil's protected areas. Around 216,000 head graze on pasture there, according to the state animal division.

"The law is an affront. If it's not declared unconstitutional, it will pose one of the greatest threats to the protection of all conservation areas facing land invasions," said Wellington Lam-

burgini, a coordinator with the local chapter of the Pastoral Land Commission, a nonprofit affiliated with the Catholic Church. "It sends the message that this crime is tolerated and will eventually be legalized." State lawmaker Luis do Hospital, who sponsored the bill, Alex Redano, president of the state parliament, and JBS all declined to comment.

Associated Press

Legal loopholes

The expectation that illegally used land will become sanctioned has been the main driver of deforestation in the Amazon.

Land-grabbers clear land in hopes it will eventually be legalized due to lax land laws or government amnesties. In most cases, the forest is cleared for pasture to show economic activity. In recent years, Rondonia's attorney general's office, state prosecutor's office and environmental agency have fined and prosecuted hundreds of cattle ranchers and four slaughterhouses for causing damage inside the Jaci-Parana conservation area, where large-scale cattle raising is forbidden.

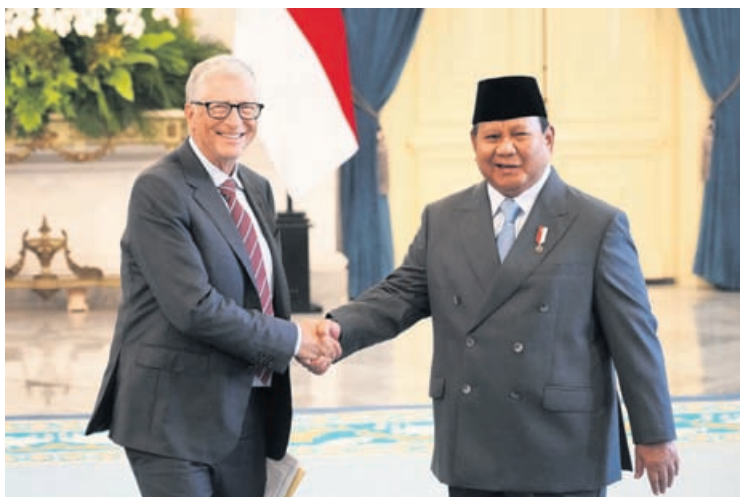
Fines and pending legal settlements total \$280 million a fraction of the more than \$1 billion in damages estimated by Rondonia state. Many of the 778 identified land invaders have never been prosecuted. While several have been convicted, most have escaped punishment due to legal loopholes.

The state prosecutor's office told The Associated Press it is considering appealing the new law. □

Bill Gates meets Indonesian leader to discuss health and sustainable development initiatives

By **NINIEK KARMINI and**
ACHMAD IBRAHIM
Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)
Bill Gates was in Indonesia on Wednesday to discuss



Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto, right, greets Microsoft co-founder and former CEO Bill Gates during their meeting at Merdeka Palace in Jakarta, Indonesia, Wednesday, May 7, 2025.

Associated Press

health and sustainable development initiatives with the leader of the world's fourth most populous country.

Gates met President Prabowo Subianto at the colonial-style Merdeka palace in Jakarta to discuss global health, nutrition, financial inclusion and public digital infrastructure, Indonesia's presidential office said in a statement ahead of the meeting.

The co-founder of Microsoft and Gates Foundation praised Indonesia's adoption of vaccines like Rotavirus for diarrhea and Pneumococcus for pneumonia and the country's efforts in reducing child mortality.

He said ten million children under the age of five worldwide died when his foundation launched in 2000, with 90% of the deaths due to diarrhea, pneumonia or malaria.

That number has now been cut in half to below five million, Gates said.

"It's been an amazing time period. And there's many new tools coming," he told the meeting, which was also attended by prominent Indonesian businesspeople and philanthropists. Gates' foundation is currently developing a tuberculosis vaccine that's planned to be tested in Indonesia, Subianto said.

"This is crucial because TB is

still a deadly disease in the country," he said.

Gates said that because rich countries don't have tuberculosis, "it just doesn't get hardly any money for diagnostics or drugs or vaccines."

Gates has granted more than \$159 million to Indonesia since 2009. Much of it was allocated to the health sector, especially for vaccine procurement, Subianto said. Thanks to the funds, Subianto said Biofarma, a state-run pharmaceutical company, now can produce two billion doses of its polio vaccine every year, benefiting more than 900 million people in 42 countries. □

Rancho Foundation Aruba National Trust preparing to represent Aruba at the Global Sustainable Summit 2025



Tuesday morning, during a press conference, the president of Stichting Rancho, Mr. Clifford Rosa, announced that Stichting Rancho will now carry the slogan of Aruba National Trust and is currently preparing to represent Aruba at the Global Sustainable Summit 2025 in St. Kitts and Nevis. This international event gathers leaders from islands around the world to share innovative solutions on sustainable development, climate resilience, and cultural heritage preservation.

Rosa explained that on April 20, Stichting Rancho celebrated its 15th anniversary, and in connection with this milestone, he announced one of the foundation's first projects under its new role. He mentioned that thanks to international trust organizations, they will attend the Global Sustainable Island Summit taking place in St.

Kitts & Nevis from May 25 to May 30.

The summit brings together government officials, non-governmental organizations, academia, and the private sector to exchange knowledge, strategies, and tools adapted to the unique challenges faced by islands. For Aruba and the Dutch Caribbean region, this summit is a crucial opportunity to raise their voices in global dialogue and ensure that solutions are grounded in Aruba's realities and history.

Rosa continued by saying that through this process, they also want to educate themselves further on developments related to island innovation, but also on all the challenges that an island like Aruba faces in relation to global themes—particularly climate change and the various pressures on cultural

heritage, both tangible and intangible.

Climate change, rising temperatures, and socio-cultural pressures such as Americanization, Eurocentrism, and an education system that prioritizes European narratives threaten the identity and sustainability of the population. Heritage is not just colonial buildings—it also includes oral traditions, fishing and farming techniques, natural landscapes, and collective memory.

The president of Stichting Rancho emphasized that as Aruba National Trust, they aim to move in a direction that integrates everything into a single approach to educate both the community and policymakers. He noted that while many international agreements are being made, the implementation or execution of many

of these projects often falls short. This, too, is a challenge they face and want to address.

"For this reason, we are making a call—we ask the community to pay attention to the importance of attending to our cultural and natural heritage in a more structured way," he stressed.

He further explained that their focus will be on the people living on the island. The effort is general, considering all the different people now residing in Aruba who often lack knowledge of what it means to live on an island.

He added that, in reality, much of the existing knowledge has already been lost due to the erosion of heritage, which is why Aruban citizens, visitors, and even those who come to live and work on the island must be educated—especially because Aruba presents itself through tourism.

"We found ourselves confronted with various issues during developments in Rancho, and we recognized that these same problems affect the entire island. Looking at the different developments we went through and the pressures that exist, this is why we stand firmly in support of our nature and our heritage—and how to conserve and preserve parts of that heritage," Rosa emphasized.



During the 2025 summit, Aruba National Trust aims to contribute to broader representation of the islands of the Dutch Kingdom and will co-organize a thematic event together with the global network of National Trusts (INTO). This event will explore how heritage can be combined with climate and economic strategies, transforming existing models such as the "Dutch Slavery" model, Pan-African, and Indigenous land management models with ancestral knowledge.

As part of the summit preparation, Aruba National Trust will organize a series of "Integration Encounters." These are not simply consultations—they are a call to work together. Aruba National Trust seeks to bring together communities of all origins, government departments, cultural organizations, and knowledge holders to build a more inclusive heritage model for Aruba. □

Dining in? Try making a local favorite How to make "pan bati"

(Oranjestad)—If you're ever up for an Aruban snack, try making another Aruban classic appetizer called Pan Bati. Similar to a pancake both in appearance and cooking, this is a super easy meal that adults and children will both enjoy. Here's how to make it!

Ingredients:

2 cups of all purpose flour
1 cup grams of fine cornmeal (we recommend the Harina PAN brand)
2 tbsp baking powder
1 1/3 cup of milk
1 pinch of salt
2 tbsp of granulated sugar
Oil for cooking

Instructions:

Add all the dry ingredients in a bowl first, and stir until well mixed. Then add the milk and beat until reached a pancake-like consistency. If more moisture is needed, add some water until reached desired consistency.

In a hot pan with oil, pour in enough batter to cover the bottom of the pan. Just like pancakes, flip the pan bati when one side turns golden brown. When your pan bati is ready, place on a plate and cover with a clean kitchen towel.

Traditionally, pan bati is cut in triangle pieces, and is often eaten as a side dish with soup, fried fish or stews. However, it is also casually enjoyed with some butter and cheese on top! □



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Experience a taste of Belgium in Aruba – Only at L'Avenue, Palm Beach



Nestled in the heart of Palm Beach, Aruba, L'Avenue brings a fresh breeze of Belgian charm to the Caribbean. Just over a year since its grand opening, this intimate bistro has quickly made its mark with its warm hospitality, authentic cuisine, and elegant yet approachable ambiance.

Whether you're strolling through Palm Beach after a morning at the beach or looking for a special dinner spot, L'Avenue welcomes you with an inviting terrace, styl-

ish décor, and the comforting aroma of Belgian classics crafted to perfection. It's a place where locals, travelers, food lovers, and beer connoisseurs come together — united by a love for great food, heartfelt service, and that unmistakable European flair.

At L'Avenue, every dish tells a story — one of tradition, seasonality, and bold yet balanced flavors. From crispy croquettes and perfectly poured Belgian beers to steaming pots of fresh mussels

flown in weekly, the menu offers something both comforting and surprising.

Now Serving: Belgium's "White Gold" — White Asparagus Season Has Begun

Among Belgium's most celebrated seasonal delicacies is white asparagus, often referred to as "wit goud" — white gold. Harvested only a few weeks each spring, this rare vegetable is sought after for its delicate, buttery taste and soft, refined texture.

At L'Avenue, the white asparagus is prepared the traditional Belgian way: tender spears topped with finely chopped eggs, layered with ham, and gratinated with cheese until golden and bubbling. It's a dish that embodies the heart of Belgian cuisine — simple ingredients, elevated through care and technique.

With daily specials also showcasing this seasonal gem in creative ways, guests have plenty of opportunities to enjoy the white asparagus while it lasts. Plates start at just \$17, making it a luxurious yet accessible indulgence.



More Than a Bistro — A Culinary Destination

L'Avenue is more than just a place to eat — it's a culinary destination. A thoughtfully curated menu, an extensive selection of premium Belgian beers, and an atmosphere that balances European elegance with island ease make it one of the most talked-about dining spots in Aruba.

Whether you're looking for a casual lunch, a romantic dinner, or a celebratory evening with friends, L'Avenue delivers a dining experience that's as memorable as it is delicious. □

Open daily for lunch and dinner
Located in the heart of Palm Beach, Aruba
Come discover Belgium's best — right here at L'Avenue.



(Oranjestad)—The cah'i orgel music box is an important and unique instrument that is used on the ABC islands in the Dutch Caribbean. This instrument is a staple in our folklore music, and its significance in the traditions of Aruba has and continues to bring together the old and young.

The origin of the cah'i orgel is said to have come from Europe around 150 years ago. A cross breed between

Ever heard of the cah'i orgel? A key instrument in Aruban folklore music

the barrel piano and the organ, the most popular stories said that the instrument came from either England or Germany, but made its way to Italy down to Venezuela, where in 1881, Mr. Horatio Sprock (1866-1949) from Curacao was first introduced to it. After that, Sprock made his own cah'i orgel "Josefina", and successfully debuted it on the streets of Barquisimeto. Back in Curacao, he started his own cah'i orgel business along with his brother Luis. In Aruba, it is said that the cah'i orgel was introduced by Rufo Wever, who later in his career became one of the composers for the Aruban national anthem.

Rufo Wever was a young musician in 1937 when he established his own cah'i orgel business on the island. Before that he experimented with his uncle's cah'i orgel, and he over the years he learned to build and repair the instrument. In fact, he was incredibly skilled in this, and he was one of the few to have recognized from the start that the cah'i orgel is an instrument that needs preserving.

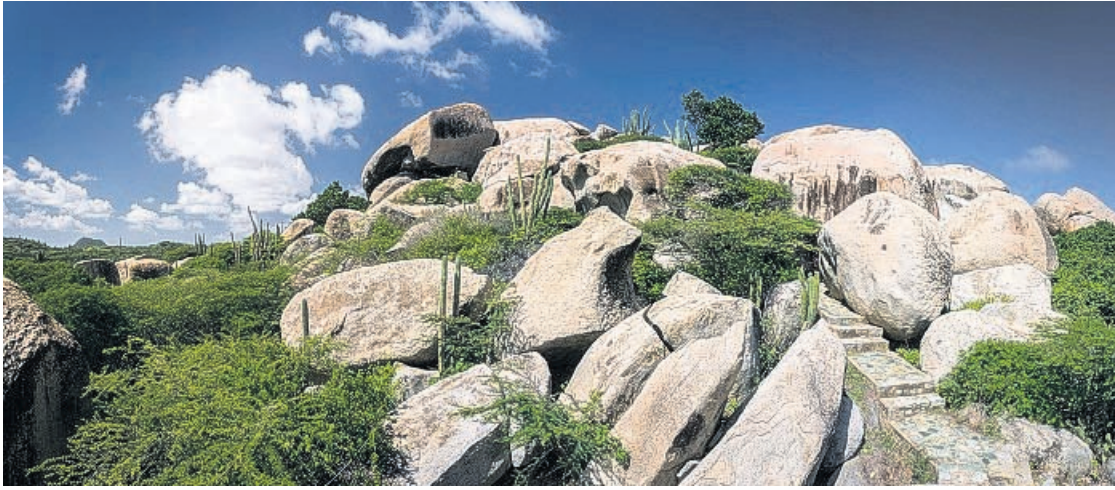
As mentioned, the cah'i orgel is a music box. made from mahogany wood, it contains a cylinder with a maximum of eight music pieces. By rotating the lever on the front side of the box, the cah'i orgel produces music similar to that of a piano, and

is accompanied often by someone else playing the "wiri", a percussion instrument made out of steel and reminiscent to the Spanish guiro. Back then, you would often also find someone playing the triangle alongside the cah'i orgel and wiri. In Aruba, the cah'i orgel and wiri is used for traditional music genres, such as the Aruban waltz, tumba, mazurka and more.

Fun fact: another name for the cah'i orgel is the "tingilingi box." □

Source: "E Cilinder Magico entre Aruba y Curaçao" by Marilyn Alcalá-Wallé, Herta Parabirsing-Balentina and Nidia Rosaria-Wallé.

Ayo & Casibari: Aruba's famous rock formations



(Oranjestad)—The Ayo and Casibari Rock Formations are known locally as one of the crucial sites to have in your “off-road” trip itinerary. These naturally formed rock formations as just one of the few places on the island that hold a rich history of our culture and of our ancestors.

Ayo

The Ayo Rock Formation is located in the northern part of the island, right on the road that leads you to the Black Stone Beach,



and close to the Natural Bridge. The Ayo is a fenced terrain that consists of several giant boulders, resting neatly on top of or side by side each other, adding gorgeous natural architecture to the surrounding “mondi”*. This is also one of the few sites to contain prehistoric markings of our

indigenous ancestors. The Ayo Rock formation contains stairs that lead you to the top of the highest boulder, offering a breathtaking view of the Aruban backyard. The Ayo is usually quiet, as it is situated farther away from the busier parts of the island. However, this is just another charm of the site: the quiet area and the refreshing breeze offer a sense of comfort and peace.



Casibari

Probably the busier rock formation site, the Casibari is situated more in the center of the island, much closer—and more accessible—to the general public. Just like Ayo, Casibari is a fenced area containing several boulders that lay on top or lean on each other. The best aspect of the Casibari Rock Formation is the accompanying view when you climb up the top of the round, flat bolder. For this position, you can see the majority of the island and the ocean in the south. Right in front of the entrance, there is the Casibari Café and Grill, a great place to get refreshments

and snack before continuing your off-road adventure!

Picture credit: Visitaruba.com

Both sites are open free to the public, 24 hours a day. However, unless you are taking a trip with a professional tour guide, there are no guides at the sites to help you climb the rock. So, do be careful when trudging on the boulders, and make sure to befriend any roaming goats you see along the way!

*Mondi: what we call our Aruban wilderness. We don't have forests, or deserts, but we do have mon-di! ☐

Aruba to me



ORANJESTAD — You are back or still enjoying your vacation?... we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

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The legend of the Kibrahacha tree

(Oranjestad)— As the climate begins to dry up here, the Kibrahacha is ready to bloom. Known locally for its bright, yellow flowers, this special tree only blooms for three to four days only. Scientifically known as *Tabebuia billbergii*, and in English as the Yellow Poui, this tree is native to the Caribbean islands of Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao, and is considered among locals as one of the most spectacular trees on the island. But did you also know that the beautiful yellow flowers have a story behind them?

The Kibrahacha is said to have extremely hard wood—so hard that it can break an axe. In fact, that's what its name means in Papiamentu: "kibra" (break) "hacha" (axe). The flowers bloom around April and May, but this only last for about three to four days, as the flowers start to fall off and the tree starts growing its green leaves. The Kibrahacha is especially particular, as it's the



only one among its neighboring trees to start blooming first.

The legend of the Kibrahacha
Written by Hubert (Lio Booi)

One day Aterima, who lived west of the hill Sero Warawara, woke up one day to find her father sleeping in his hammock, suffering a bout of terrible fever. Her mother was very worried, and as was the custom in the olden days, asked Aterima to go fetch Kudawecha, who was a epistemophile, to come see his father.

Aterima wasted to time and went to go fetch Kudawecha. Upon telling Kudawecha that her father was sick, he immediately accompanied Aterima back to her hut, where he encountered her father in a bad state. Not willing to waste any time, he told Aterima that the only thing that can cure her father is a home-made potion made out of the Kibrahacha flower. At the time the Kibrahacha was not yet in her blooming season, but the stubborn Kudawecha was determined to bring back Aterima's father back to health, and so off they went to the nearest Kibrahacha tree.

When they arrived at the tree, they saw that it was covered head to toe in thorns, with only a few closed flowers at the very top. Kudawecha, experienced veteran in all things Aruban flora and fauna, told Aterima to start plucking the thorns of the tree to climb to the top where the flowers are. Aterima, just as determined to save her father, didn't hesitate to start.

To her surprise, every time she plucked a thorn of the tree, a bright, yellow flower bloomed in its place. The thorns were hard to pluck out, but Aterima continued plucking with enthusiasm and wonder at the unfolding sight before her. Not too long after she was able to fill her entire satchel with the yellow flowers. Kudawecha, satisfied to see Aterima so happy and encouraged to help her father, took her back to her hut.

Upon arriving back at the



hut, Aterima's mother quickly made a tea out of the flowers and gave it to her sick husband. Miraculously, after just one sip of the tea, the father's fever left his body immediately, and he opened eyes and sprung up feeling new.

The next morning, they all visited the same Kibrahacha tree that saved the life of Aterima's father and they saw another miracle. The tree was covered again in the same bright, yellow flowers, with not a thorn in sight. And as the legend goes, from that day on, the Kibrahacha tree no longer produced any more thorns. □

Aruban snacks and where to find them

ORANJESTAD — Want to taste something different for a change? How about some Aruban snacks that you can find all around the island? Hop in your car, and go to these locations to find some of the most popular and tasty snacks that are beloved by our locals.

One of the staples of Aruban cuisine and snacks is the Pastechi. Pastechi is a Caribbean fried pastry that is filled with cheese, meat, chicken, veggies and sometimes even fish! Or perhaps you might want to try a croquette, locally called a "kroket," which is a crusty fried snack with typically a meat and dough mix filling. The Aruban kroket is based on its Dutch counterpart, the "bitterbal".

These two snacks are typically found in all local snack trucks, which can be found all over the island, including on the side of the main road



that stretches from San Nicolas to the Hotel Area. You can also find pastechis and krokets at local bakeries and snack shops, like Bright Bakery in Piedra Plat, Huchada in Santa Cruz or Pastechi House in the city center. These places may also sell other snacks and sandwiches too, perfect for on-the-road lunch break.

While you're at it, why not accompany your snack with a refreshing "batido"? Batidos are fruit shakes, typically made with added milk for



some creaminess. However, you can also ask to hold the milk. Batidos are commonly found in snack shops too. You may find some batido shops next to the flea markets downtown, or if you're on your way to San Nicolas, at Mauchi Smoothies and Juice Bar in Savaneta (located at the side of the main road).

If you are looking for something a bit more fresh and healthy, why not try some coconuts, or shaved ice from local vendors? These vendors carry their little shop at the back of their truck, so they are ever-moving around the island. However, there are a few spots where you can almost always find a coconut/shaved

ice vendor:

1. Right next to the Red Anchor in San Nicolas, on the way to Baby Beach.
2. Along the main road next to the airport field.
3. At the California Light House.
4. At the Alto Vista Chapel.

These vendors may also sell other delights, like the beloved coconut-based dessert "cocada" or peanuts. All in all, in Aruba, you can always find some place to take a break and have a bite of something local, you maybe just might have to look for them! □

Photo credit: wheninaruba.com



Basic driving rules on Aruba: Roundabouts

(Oranjestad)—Have you ever felt confused when you're driving on the highways or backstreets of Aruba? Then we present a simple guide to some of the basic rules of Aruban traffic, along with some tips for things to look out for.

Speed limit

Legally, the speed limit on the four-lane highways is 80 km/h. This speed limit also counts for the main roads that are connected to the highways. The minimum speed is 50 km/h. Most people drive around 60 km/h on the main roads and about 70 km/h on the highways. There are also areas that indicate a speed limit on a sign; these are usually around populated and school areas.

The four-lane highways contain the left-lane, also known as the "fast" lane for each direction. Here is where vehicles can drive up to the maximum speed. However, legally it is not permitted to drive for long periods of time on the left lane. This lane is primarily designed for drivers to switch lanes before a roundabout, for example, if your exit on the roundabout is on your far left. The general lane to drive in—both at maximum and minimum speed—is on the right lane.

Roundabouts

Speaking of roundabouts, it is important to know where you have to enter and drive on the roundabout to make your exit. A good rule of thumb is to count the exits starting from your right side. So, exit 1 would be on your right; exit 2 would be straight ahead; exit 3 would be on your far left and exit 4 would lead to the road paralleled to the one you're on, heading in the other direction.



Most roundabouts have these 4 exits, so they are relatively simple. When you're driving on the four-lane highway, it is important to know when to switch to the left lane to make your exit: if your exit is on your far left (exit 3), then you need to switch to the left lane on the high way before nearing the roundabout so you can take the path that leads you directly to your exit. If your exit is on your right or if you're going straight ahead, you can keep driving in the right lane of the highway.

It's also important to know that vehicles about to enter the roundabout must yield to those already on it. A good rule of thumb is to look out if someone is coming from your left side.

However, other roundabouts can be

quite tricky to navigate...

Watty Vos Boulevard (the "paperclip" roundabout)

Probably the biggest roundabout on the island, the "paperclip" roundabout on the Watty Vos Boulevard is one of the trickier roundabouts that could—and has—caused confusion among both tourists and locals. However, once you take a good look at it, it's fairly simple. The basis is just the same as a regular roundabout (left exit? left lane! etc.), but instead of having four different exits like on a regular roundabout, now you have two extra; one on the right and the other on the left side of the roundabout. The rules don't change at all, you just have to keep an extra eye open.

Airport roundabout

Ah, yes. The infamous airport roundabout. The favorite roundabout amongst local, because of its easy (hard) lanes that never (always) cause confusion among drivers. Sarcasm aside, this roundabout can be tricky to enter, especially when you're driving from the direction of the airport heading. When you're driving away from the airport reaching the roundabout, you'll be faced with three lanes. The far right lane is to take the exit 1 out heading east (right lane of highway). The middle exit is used for exit 1 (left lane of highway), 2 and 3. The far left exit is used to only exit on exit 3 (left lane of highway) and 4.

"Las Americas" roundabout

The Las Americas roundabout is located near the Talk of the Town hotel, west from the airport roundabout. This roundabout may look like a regular roundabout—and for the most part, it is. However, when you are driving from the east going in the direction of town, please take note that there are two exits on your right.

When you're driving towards this roundabout, you'll notice that the road becomes wider, splitting into two lanes. The right lane is used to take the first and second exit on the right. If you want to exit straight ahead, you must drive on the left lane!

It's always scary to drive in new places where the traffic may look and work differently, but once you get it right once, you'll get the hang of it in no time. Additionally, all roundabouts and roads on Aruba have signs and arrows painted on the road to help guide you. So take your time, keep your eyes open and don't forget to wear a seat belt! ☐



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 45 Plane

1 Baby's features bed

5 Multiplied by growth

10 Gave an edge

12 Operative

13 Holmes's beloved Irene

14 Terra —

15 Notice

16 Stifle

18 May

20 "Roses — red"

21 Banish

23 Composer Rorem

24 Dozes

26 Formerly owned

28 Singer

29 Fill fully

31 Bill dispenser

32 Commotion

36 Monastery address

39 Mine matter

40 Roofed patio

41 Moses of the track

43 Decree

44 Out of style

DOWN

1 Gorge

2 Roping contest

3 Harbor

4 Worker, e.g.

5 Folded food

6 "— You Babe"

7 Flam-mable gas

8 Went in

9 Was rude, in a way

11 The

Lorax's creator

17 "— Miniver"

19 Bunny move

22 Instructed

24 Clause in a sports contract

25 Cleaner additive

27 Deter-mined

28 Restau-rant units

30 Mock

33 Instruc-tional

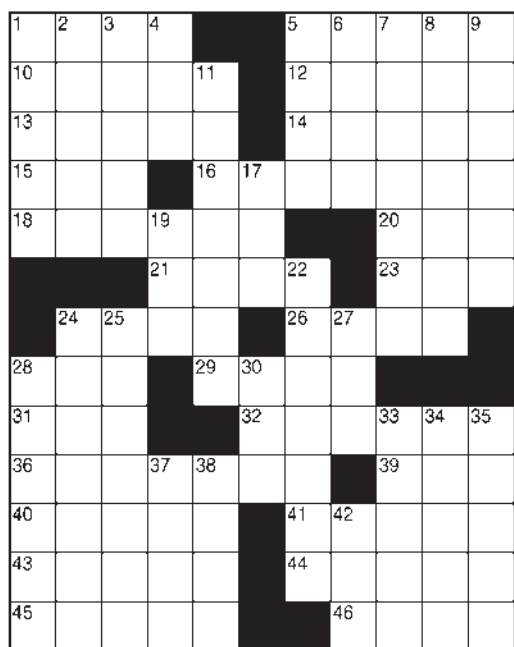
34 Great Lakes tribe

35 Tears

37 Diplomatic skill

38 Success-ful songs

42 River stopper



5-11

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

5-11

CRYPTOQUOTE

UM KWP YZUXT KWP QJS YWW

RHQAA YW HQTS Q NUMMSJSXGS,

KWP ZQLSX'Y RVSXY YZS XUIZY

EUYZ Q HWRDPUYW. — QMJUGQX

VJWLSJC

Cryptoquote: NO GOOD MOVIE IS TOO LONG AND NO BAD MOVIE IS SHORT ENOUGH. — ROGER EBERT

Cruise ship Schedule: May 1 - 11 2025

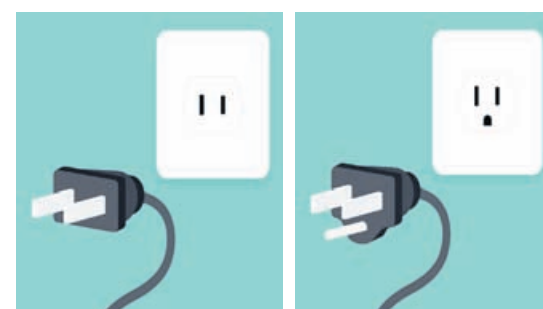
			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
THU	01	CELEBRITY SILHOUETTE	09.00	23.00	C	1
SUN	04	FREEWINDS - Dept.	****	22.30	G	-
TUE	06	CARNIVAL MAGIC	08.00	22.00	C	1
WED	07	FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1
SUN	11	FREEWINDS - Dept.	****	22.30	E	-

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basicbut important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.



Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.



Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.



Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.



Energy Star, efficiency program that has steered consumer choice, targeted in cuts



An Energy Star logo is displayed on a box for a freezer Jan. 21, 2025, in Evendale, Ohio.

Associated Press

By **MICHAEL PHILLIS** and
ALEXA ST. JOHN
Associated Press

An Environmental Protection Agency plan to eliminate its Energy Star offices would end a decades-old program that gave consumers a choice to buy environmentally friendly refrigerators, dishwashers and other electronics and save money on electric bills, consumer and environmental groups said. The changes, outlined in agency documents reviewed by The Associated Press, are part of a broad reorganization at the EPA that would eliminate or reorganize significant parts of the office focused on air pollution. Those plans advance Presi-

dent Donald Trump's sharp turn away from the prior administration's focus on climate change. The EPA did not confirm directly it was ending the program, first reported Tuesday by CNN, but said the reorganization "is delivering organizational improvements to the personnel structure that will directly benefit the American people and better advance the agency's core mission, while Powering the Great American Comeback." The EPA launched Energy Star in 1992 with the goal of tackling environmental protection and economic growth. It boosts the market for energy-efficient products

and benefits companies that design appliances that earn the label. A home that decides to buy Energy Star products can save \$450 annually on energy costs, the program's website says.

"People recognize it right away, so they would be like 'oh, it is Energy Star, so I should probably go with this one,'" said Francis Dietz, spokesperson with the trade association Air-Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigeration Institute.

Steven Nadel, executive director of the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy, said the program enjoyed bipartisan support until recently. It promotes efficiency by tightening standards when lots of products are able to meet the label requirements, he said. □

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San Nicolas

Imsan 24 hours
Tel.524 8833

PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad:

Paradera: Tel.588 6638

San Nicolas:

Aloe:Tel.584 4606

OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850
Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002
Urgent Care 586 0448
Walk-In Doctor's Clinic
+297 588 0539

EMERGENCY

Police	100
Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas	587 5900
Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

TRAVEL INFO

Aruba Airport	524 2424
American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

AID FOUNDATIONS

Aruba Food Bank
Tel. 588 0002
FAVI- Visually Impaired
Tel. 582 5051
Alcoholics Anonymous
Tel. 736 2952
Narcotics Anonymous
Tel. 583 8989
Fundacion Contra Violencia
Relacional Tel. 583 5400
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Editor
Caribbean Speed Printers N.V.
Aruba Bank N.V. Acc. #332668
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RBC Royal Bank Acc. #1330772

Editors

Pilar Flores
Richard Brooks
Angenette Figuereo

Sales

Mark Gomes
Sulaika Croes

Classifieds

classified@cspnv.com

Distribution and Collection

accounting@bondia.com

Social / Website

Juan Luis Pinto

Weststraat 22
T: 582-7800
E: news@arubatoday.com
W: www.arubatoday.com
f @arubatoday

STOP
Violence Against Women

Movie Review: Dark bromance 'Friendship' hysterically explores modern men's awkward embrace

By **MARK KENNEDY**
AP Entertainment Writer

Craig Waterman is a suburban dad in middle age who favors extremely puffy jackets, yearns to see the new Marvel movie and is so uncool that he lobbies his town to have speed bumps installed. Naturally, he has no friends.

That changes one day when a misdirected package arrives in the mail and he trots off to hand deliver it to his new neighbor, Austin Carmichael, who has a '70s vibe: a mustache, soul patch and a neckerchief. He's a TV weatherman and fronts a punk band. Naturally, he has a tight group of male friends.

So begins Andrew DeYoung's auspicious debut feature "Friendship," which tackles modern masculinity and male loneliness with biting satire and humor, taking detours into horror and the surreal.

Craig (Tim Robinson, at his awkward best) is instantly smitten platonically by Austin (Paul Rudd, at his charismatic best) and why would he not? The neighbor is everything Craig is



This image released by A24 shows Tim Robinson, left, and Paul Rudd in a scene from "Friendship." Associated Press

not. Craig is like one of those loser characters in the Progressive Insurance commercials about not becoming your parents. "It's a school night for me!" he'll announce when the party is just getting started.

"Might be nice to have a pal, a bud," suggests Craig's wife, a wonderful Kate Mara, who is drifting

away from her husband. His teenage son is, too. You would be as well if your dad ended a conversation with "Stay curious!"

Craig soon comes under Austin's spell: the pair smoking, going on an adventure to an aqueduct at night, looking at his collection of early human tools, foraging for mushrooms, some light

boxing and singing along with his friends to an impromptu a cappella version of "My Boo" by Ghost Town DJ's.

Craig falls hard, fantasizing about joining his neighbor's band and backslapping with his new band of brothers. "You make me feel so free," he confesses to his cool neighbor. But he

doesn't have the skills to play it cool. As the kids today say, he has no rizz.

DeYoung is at his best here, exploring the slippery notions of masculinity, both tender and muscular, and the difficulty of joining a circle of guys with their own idiosyncratic and iron laws. "Friendship" shows Craig aping his man-crush and failing terribly and bringing down the object of his bromance at the same time. It's as if Larry David remade "Single White Female."

Most impressive is that DeYoung has not created a collection of connected "SNL" skits. Each part cleverly feeds to another, with echoes throughout the script. If a muscle car is mentioned at the top, you'll know you'll find a muscle car by the end. Same with a lick or sliding doors.

DeYoung also has things to say about our commercial-saturated times, where even Craig's desperate attempt to get super high and escape his disintegrating life ends with a pedestrian hallucination where he just orders from a fast food joint. □

Music Review: Radiohead's Thom Yorke and Mark Pritchard team up for inventive 'Tall Tales'



This cover image released by Warp Records shows "Tall Tales" by Thom Yorke and Mark Pritchard.

Associated Press

By **JIM POLLOCK**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

"Tall Tales," the first full-length collaboration between Radiohead singer Thom Yorke and electronic music pioneer Mark Pritchard, captures two prolific artists without much to prove and whole worlds left to explore.

The project was conceived during the COVID-19 pandemic, when Yorke and Pritchard, both working remotely, began exchanging and modifying sound files. A half-decade later, the collaboration journeys back into the isolation of that period and far beyond. (And the partnership shouldn't come as too much of a surprise: Pritchard previously worked with Yorke on the 2016 track "Beautiful People.")

"Tall Tales" captures their shared, endearing spirit of experimentation in a collection of dystopian, prog electronics that will satisfy fans of both artists.

Across the album, Pritchard's inventive productions often serve as a perfect foil for Yorke's darker lyrics and mournful vo-

cals.

Pritchard is a synthesizer sommelier, too, utilizing classic vintage electronic instruments dating back many decades, such as the Arp Odyssey, Wurlitzer Sideman and the Minimoog.

Yorke returns to themes of tech dystopia, consumerism and alienation that he has explored since the 1997 Radiohead album "OK Computer," evidenced in tracks like "Gangsters" and "The Men Who Dance in Stag's Heads." On the latter, a droning satire of billionaire self-indulgence, he sings, "We sign their papers/ We line their pockets."

The opening track, "A Fake in a Faker's World," serves up a mission statement for the project. There, Pritchard presents a whirlwind of digital sounds, with Yorke's human voice the sole organic element. The two tracks that follow are ambient works that seem destined for IMAX films or A24 soundtracks. "Ice Shelf" is cold and glacial as Yorke sings "Standing solo on an ice shelf." □

After Larkin's challenge, some top U.S. players commit to worlds with Milan Olympics on the horizon

By STEPHEN WHYNO
AP Hockey Writer

Mere minutes after a crushing overtime defeat to Canada in the final of the 4 Nations Face-Off tournament, U.S. veteran Dylan Larkin already had a sharp criticism and a suggestion to his fellow Americans about how to prevent similar outcomes in the future. "We've had a tough time with USA Hockey getting guys to play in the world championships, and I think guys that are at home watching this, I'm hoping they're wanting a piece of it," Larkin said. "They got to go to the world championships and prove themselves and play for their country." Clayton Keller listened. So did Tage Thompson. Jeremy Swayman was on the U.S. 4 Nations roster, but with no guarantee he'll be one of the three goaltenders at the Olympics in nine months, he committed, too. It's no sure thing they'll be in Milan next February or that the U.S. will win Olympic gold for the first time since the 1980 "Miracle on Ice" team. But getting elite talent to worlds this spring is a good start with the aim of winning the tournament for the first time since 1933. "We need to get some



United States' Dylan Larkin (left) celebrates his goal against Canada with Matt Boldy, left to right, Jaccob Slavin and Brock Faber during second period 4 Nations Face-Off hockey action in Montreal on Saturday, Feb. 15, 2025.

Associated Press

winning swagger back," U.S. world championship coach Ryan Warsofsky told The Associated Press by phone before leaving for Europe. "We want to be a team and a country that has a winning pedigree, and we've got to start winning this tournament." The fact that the U.S. won World War II more recently than the IIHF World Ice Hockey Championship is something general manager Jeff Kealty brought up to everyone he signed up

to play. Warsofsky called it "the ultimate motivation," while acknowledging also that a lot of guys on the team have a lot to play for to get on the Olympic radar. "I don't think it's going to be the be-all, end-all as to whether or not some of these guys make the team in February, but I don't think there's any question that it can help and it can get them front and center with USA Hockey," Kealty told The AP.

It might make the difference for the final few roster spots after the likes of Thompson, Keller, Jason Robertson and Cole Caufield were left off the 4 Nations team. U.S. Olympic GM Bill Guerin is going to Denmark to watch and scout, and he said he puts "a big emphasis" on players participating and showing what they can do on a big international stage. "It's not necessarily how many goals you score or this or that: When are we

going to win that tournament? We need to win that tournament soon," Guerin said Tuesday. "We need our best players though. Sidney Crosby and Nathan MacKinnon are going. That should say something. It is a commitment from our players to go and try to win that tournament. ... It is an Olympic year, but we need this more consistently from our players to go over and play and try to win that tournament." Canada has won it four times over the past decade, since back-to-back Olympic titles with NHL players in 2010 and '14. Crosby and MacKinnon joining this year makes the top hockey country on earth the favorite once again. But the U.S. wants to close the gap on Canada, and even reaching the world championship final for the first time since 1956 would be a step forward. The Americans, of course, are not shooting for silver. "The biggest thing for us to make a name and a statement is to win the tournament," Warsofsky said. "That's what we'll be remembered for as the team that's won a tournament for the first time since 1933." Just getting great U.S. players to take the tournament seriously would be a plus. □

Utah Mammoth is the permanent name of the NHL team in Salt Lake City

By STEPHEN WHYNO
AP Hockey Writer

The NHL team in Salt Lake City is now known as the Utah Mammoth. Owners Ryan and Ashley Smith unveiled the franchise's permanent name Wednesday after more than a year of fan input and voting. "From Day 1, we committed that this team would be built with and for the people of Utah, and we are excited to celebrate today's launch with the entire state," they said in a statement announcing the name. "The community chose the Utah Mammoth brand, and it stands as a symbol of who we are, where we came from and the unstoppable force we're building together." Mammoth replaces the inaugural season placeholder name Utah Hockey Club, which was also one of the three finalists. Yeti was taken out of consideration when the cooler company bearing that name could not come to a copyright agreement with Utah ownership, and Wasatch a reference to the state's mountain range was quickly replaced as an option by Outlaws. The Mammoth are maintaining the same black, light blue and white color scheme and the road jerseys with UTAH diagonally down the front. The logo includes a nod to the mountains, the shape of the state and a curved tusk that forms a "U." Mammoth fossils have been found throughout Utah, including a complete skeleton in Huntington Canyon in 1988. The team said "Tusks Up" will be its rallying cry. □



This graphic provided by the Smith Entertainment Group shows the new logo and branding for Utah's NHL hockey club, now called the Utah Mammoth.

Associated Press

'Hands tied': Athletes left in dark as NCAA settlement leaves murky future for non-revenue sports

By MAURA CAREY
AP Sports Writer

The \$2.8 billion NCAA settlement awaiting final approval from a federal judge is touted as a solution for thousands of athletes to finally get the money they deserve and provide some clarity to recruiting. For some, it's too late.

Sophomore distance runner Jake Rimmel says he was one of five walk-ons cut from Virginia Tech's cross country team after Thanksgiving break. Rimmel decided to take a leave of absence and train independently while considering his next move something that's proven easier said than done.

"Everyone's got their hands tied right now, so there's



The nation office of the NCAA is shown in Indianapolis on March 12, 2020.

Associated Press

just not many opportunities for me," Rimmel told the

Associated Press. "I've just been having to bet on my-

self and trust the process. It's just been lonely. I've

been at home training by myself and living with my family again. Thank God for my family and all, I appreciate them.

It's still kind of lonely though, being out of the norm, not being at school and with my friends."

Pending approval, the so-called House settlement will allow schools to share revenue with athletes directly for use of their name, image and likeness (NIL). That could secure generational wealth for some but not others, and replacing scholarship caps with roster limitations is expected to leave walk-ons, partial scholarship earners, non-revenue sport athletes and high school recruits at risk. There are deep concerns about the potential impact on sports that feed the U.S. Olympic teams.

U.S. District Judge Claudia Wilken told attorneys handling the settlement to come back to her with a plan soon to protect athletes currently or recently on rosters at schools across the country, a request seen as a way to soften the blow.

What that looks like is anyone's guess for now, but thousands of athletes like Rimmel have no idea where they might be this fall or are in jeopardy of no longer playing college sports at all. And many athletes balancing school and their sport are unaware of what's at stake and have more questions than answers.

Belmont track and field athlete Sabrina Ootsburg said everything she knows about the settlement is from personal research.

"My school doesn't do a lot of education around it (the settlement).

Every now and then, we'll be told, 'Hey, if you want to sign up to potentially get some money from this House settlement that's happening, you can do that,'" Ootsburg said. "It's almost like the education we're being given is optional to consume, even though it's limited." □



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